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We're a local bank in over 100 countries that we serve.”
Yousef Omar, Manager, Commercial Bank, North Texas, Citi

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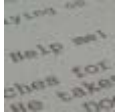
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[James Fallows](#) - James Fallows is a National Correspondent for *The Atlantic*. A 25-year veteran of the magazine and former speechwriter for Jimmy Carter, he is also an instrument-rated pilot and a onetime program designer at Microsoft.

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James Fallows is National Correspondent for *The Atlantic*. He has worked for the magazine for more than 25 years, based in Washington DC, Seattle, Berkeley, Austin, Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur, Shanghai, and most recently Beijing. He was raised in Redlands, California, received his undergraduate degree in American history and literature from Harvard, and received a graduate degree in economics from Oxford. In addition to working for theatlantic.com/politics/.../56230/

the Atlantic, he has spent two years as chief White House speechwriter for Jimmy Carter, two years as the editor of *US News & World Report*, and six months as a program designer at Microsoft. He is an instrument-rated private pilot.

Fallows has been a finalist for the National Magazine Award five times and has won once; he has also won the American Book Award for nonfiction and has been an Emmy nominee for a documentary "Doing Business in China." He was the founding chairman of the New America Foundation. His two most recent books, *Blind Into Baghdad* (2006) and *Postcards from Tomorrow Square* (2009) are based his writings for *The Atlantic*. He is married and has two sons.

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"The Fear Department"

May 7 2010, 12:48 AM ET

In response to [this item](#), about how the TSA would respond to the New York bomb threat, and [this one](#) about the closing of the Supreme Court's main entrance etc, several reader replies:

1) About the Supreme Court closure, a reader writes:

This reminds me of a quote on the destruction of the old Penn Station in NY and it's replacement with the underground station under Madison Square Garden.

"We used to enter the city like gods; now we enter it like rats." - Vincent Scully

For years I thought it was a quote from the [Dodgers announcer](#) and I would hear it in his wonderful voice but sadly it's a quote from an [architecture professor at Yale](#). Still true though.*

2) From the managers of the wonderful (Onion-esque) [Department of Fear](#):



Just a quick note to say 1) we have acted upon your suggestion with respect to the Arizona law and we hope you might be willing to attend the upcoming presentation by Prof. Xu Wei;
2) we are especially keen about your idea for improving the Lincoln memorial -- just a matter of getting National Parks on board.

Also, thank you for not speculating too much about "whether creation of an ever-threatened public mood is deliberate, or what interests it serves." Public ignorance regarding this question certainly cannot hurt. As we like to say, "timendi causa est nescire."

Regards, Malcolm
Directorate Sec. Malcolm P. Stag III
DOF Center, Joseph R. McCarthy Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington D.C., 20005 <http://feardepartment.com>

Seriously, it is worth checking out [their site](#).

3) If you were looking for a single volume to put the real world Department of Fear in perspective, and explore practical ways to deflect real threats while also protecting America's values, I highly endorse the Cato Institute's new book [Terrorizing Ourselves](#). [Launch event](#) in DC on May 24. I am not an uncritical admirer of the overall Cato worldview, but this is a very valuable book.

4) In a similar vein, (the Atlantic's own correspondent) Lane Wallace, in [a column](#) for Flying Magazine, discusses how the sangfroid attitude I described in New York applies in aviation too. (Disclosure: she compliments my item, but that's not the main reason I'm mentioning this. It is another way of explaining the value of calm in the face of risk.)

5) After the jump, in case you haven't seen it, a Lewis Black clip from 2000 about New Yorkers refusing to be terrorized by terrorists. Because it is done without any awareness of the 9/11 attacks, at first it produces a gasp. But in the long run I think its attitude holds up well. (Thanks to Ari Ofsevit.)

Lewis Black, 2000:

Jokes.com
Lewis Black - New York Senator
comedians.comedycentral.com

* Joseph M, who sent in the Vincent Scully item, followed up:

I double checked and here is a better source for the quote.

[NYT, 6/20/93](#): "One entered the city like a God," the architectural historian Vincent Scully famously wrote of the original station. "One scuttles in now like a rat."

Like a lot of quotes, words get altered in the repeating. I've read it 10 times the way I sent it and this is the first time I've seen it as "One entered...". If I read it in the original I would have never imagined a train full of ballplayers getting off in Penn Station which is no fun.

This is why in journalism we have the phrase, "too good to check."

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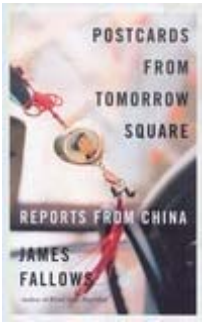
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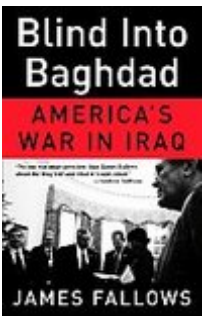
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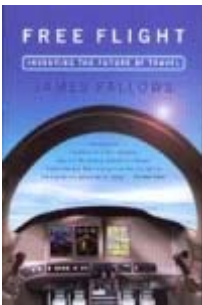
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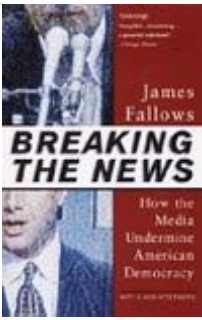
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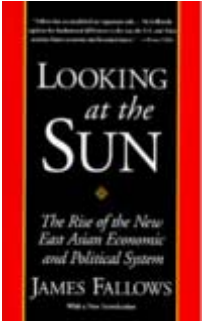
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